



Theodore Edson Parker Mausoleum

History

Theodore Edson Parker, nephew and heir of Moses Greeley Parker, died in Lowell on January 10, 1938, at age 79. His wife, Harriet Talbot Parker, died on January 26, 1944. Although Theodore had expected her to be buried in the mausoleum, she outlived him and chose to be buried elsewhere in this cemetery, in the Talbot family lot.

Art and Architecture

This mausoleum is in the picturesque Gothic Revival style. The architect was Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942), born in Hampton Falls, N.H. A successful Boston-based architect, writer, and teacher, he became the foremost Gothic revival architect in the United States.

Gothic Revival represents old world elegance and integrity. It is notable for pointed arches, large windows and towers. The Parker Mausoleum has decorative parapets on the top of the tower that derive from the functional battlements of walled cities, castles, and fortified country homes in Europe. Like many other architectural details, including the covered entrance, what was once functional and pragmatic is used here as ornamentation, emphasizing the historic look of a previous age.

Almost single-handedly, Cram changed the style of stained glass in the early 20th century from the Tiffany-opalescent window to the Neo-Gothic window that looks medieval. The glass is colored, but transparent. He wanted his windows to be two-dimensional without a sense of depth. He felt that windows should be an extension of the wall, not a hole in the wall. Cram was critical of what he called "picture windows." Visitors can keep this in mind when they see the Tiffany window in the Moses Greeley Parker Mausoleum.

In 1888, Cram opened an architectural firm in Boston, where he became associated with B.G. Goodhue and later with F.W. Ferguson. Together they designed many major churches. Cram and Ferguson transformed the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (nicknamed St. John the Unfinished) in New York City from a Romanesque to a late Gothic building, making it one of the great cathedrals of the world.

Cram insisted that educational buildings be Gothic and designed the graduate college (1913) and chapel at Princeton University in this spiritual style. His influence helped establish Gothic as the standard style for the American college and university buildings of the period.

Family Obituaries

Theodore Edson Parker obituary appeared in the *Lowell Sun* on January 11, 1938:

Death Takes T.E. Parker. Widely Known Resident Dies at Chestnut Street Home After Long Illness

Death late last night brought to a sudden end the career of Theodore Edson "Stager" Parker, reputedly the largest individual holder of American Telephone & Telegraph Co stock in the world and one of Lowell's wealthiest citizens at his home, 142 Chestnut Street. He was nearly 80 years of age. His illness had extended over the past five years, although death came unexpectedly. He leaves his widow, the former Harriet Talbot, and several cousins.

He was the son of Theodore Parker, half-brother of Dr. Moses Greeley Parker of Dracut, one of the pioneers in the telephone industry. Following his education in the Lowell schools, he attended Amherst College and Harvard University, class of 1880, but before completing his course, left to enter the telephone business. He successfully held several positions of importance, including those of business manager at New Bedford and commercial superintendent for the eastern Massachusetts division. Mr. Parker also was connected with the Boott mills here for a score of years.

The Parker ancestry dated back in this country to Kendall Parker of East Dracut, who served in the Revolutionary War. The family was linked with the Coburn family of Dracut and Theodore Edson Parker, Jr., and was one of the charter members of the Sons of the American Revolution. His uncle, Dr. Moses Greeley Parker, died in 1917 leaving his property to the nephew and to the doctor's sister, Mrs. Mary Greeley Morrison. When the latter died a few years later, Theodore inherited the remainder of the Parker fortune.

He was a charter member of the Yorick Club, a member of the Harvard Club and Boston City Club and also of the Vesper Boat Club and first member of the Vesper Country Club. Funeral arrangements will be announced later.

Articles on disbursement of Parker estate:

Lowell Sun, Friday, January 14, 1938:

Funeral services for Theodore Edson Parker were held at his home, 142 Chestnut street, yesterday afternoon and were private. Rev. Simeon E. Cozad, pastor of All Souls Church, officiated. The body was placed in the Theodore E. Parker mausoleum in Lowell cemetery. The funeral was in charge of J. Colby Bassett of Boston.

Lowell Sun, Saturday, January 22, 1938:

His Fortune to Charities. Will of T. E. Parker Sets Up Huge Trust Funds and Bequests

EAST CAMBRIDGE, Jan 22 - Distributing an estate estimated at well over a million dollars, the will of Theodore Edson Parker who died in Lowell on Jan. 10, was filed in Middlesex probate court yesterday. Under the will, Mr. Parker's widow, Harriet Talbot Parker and J. Colby Bassett, of Boston, are named executors and trustees.

Although there are a number of specified individual bequests, mainly to household employees, the vast portion of the huge estate is left to Mrs. Parker during her lifetime. After her death the estate is to be distributed in a score of ways.

Lowell association, institutions and homes for aged will benefit as well as many relatives.

Straight immediate bequests to members of his household staff include: William Hillier, chauffeur and secretary, \$5000; William P. Haggerty, chauffeur, \$3000; Peter Healy, Cary C Fancy, Mary Brennan and Margaret McDrury, each \$1000; Lizzie Davis, \$2000. A codicil to the will stipulates that all employees shall continue to work for Mrs. Parker at prevailing wages.

To his nurse, Hylda J Tucker, Mr. Parker leaves \$10,000 and to Lot C Peach of Marblehead "in memory of happy days fishing together," \$1000.

All of Mr. Parker's personal effects go to his wife along with the house on Chestnut Street. At his wife's death, the will stipulates that his books shall go to the Dracut Memorial library. Large trust funds are established for relatives, including cousins. The residue of the trust, goes to his wife.

At the death of Mrs. Parker, the will stipulates and sets up a number of trust funds, as follows: Relatives, to the total amount of \$400,000; Lowell Cemetery association, \$100,000; Lowell Art association, \$50,000; Lowell Country Week fund, \$15,000; Battles Home for Aged Men, \$50,000; Old Ladies Home, Lowell, \$50,000; Lowell Boys Club association, \$50,000.

The Salvation Army will be remembered with an outright bequest of \$50,000.

The residue of the estate will go into a charitable trust, to be known as the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation, and will be for the purpose of supporting and contributing to various charitable, educational and philanthropic institutions, either within or without the boundaries of Massachusetts. No bond was filed with the will.

Harriet Talbot Parker's obituary appeared in the *Lowell Sun*, Saturday, January 29, 1944:

Many Attend Parker Obsequies. Many organizations Represented at Rites

LOWELL - Funeral services for Mrs. Harriet Talbot Parker were held from her home, 142 Chestnut Street at 2:30 o'clock, this afternoon. Many friends and representatives of organizations with which she had been connected for many years were in attendance.

Rev. Simeon E. Cozad, pastor of All Souls church, officiated at the services. Honorary bearers and ushers were Mayor Woodbury F. Howard, Frederick A. Flather, Frederic S. Clark Jr and Lincoln Clark. From the Lowell Boys Club, an organization in which Mrs. Parker had shown great interest, there was the following delegation: Newell L. Foster, Walter C. Wilson, Francis M. Qua, Walter B. Reilly, J. Rogers Flather, Alber D. Milliken, W. Bevan Dunsford, Maj. Walter R. Jeyes and Walter R. Jeyes, Jr. Among those from the board of directors of the Old Ladies Home who were present were Mrs. W. W. Dennett, Mrs. E. T. Shaw, Mrs. Charlotte Greene Blaney and William G. Spence.

Many members of All Souls Church, of which Mrs. Parker was a member, and of organizations and societies of that church, attended. Representatives of the following organizations were also present: Lowell Historical Society, Fortnightly Club, Lowell Art Association, Lowell Garden Club, Middlesex Women's Club, International Institute and the Children's Home.

There were many flowers. Burial in the Talbot lot in the Lowell Cemetery. The funeral was in charge of Thomas Talbot Clark under the direction of Robert T. Morse.